



# The Spotswood **Blue**Print



## **U.S. Soccer Birth Year Registration Initiative**

Birth-year registration calendars will now align with the start of the calendar year and run from January to December, rather than August/September to July as it had previously. For example, a U-15 player (players 15 years old or younger) would have a birth year of 2000 (Jan. 1 through Dec. 31) for the 2015 registration year. In 2016, U-15 players would be born in 2001 or earlier. Birth-year registration applies to all player age groups and not just players age 12 and younger.

**Current Year - Birth Year = Registration Age**

**2017 - 2010 = 7 (U7)**

The initiative will align registration with the international standard, while simultaneously providing clearer information on player birth dates to combat 'relative age effect'.

Relative age effect refers to the selection bias related to players that are more physically mature than their peers due to being born earlier in the year. U.S. Soccer seeks a balance of players that are born throughout the year so that all players, those born in the earlier months, and those born later have equal opportunity to grow and develop as soccer players.

The current August 1 cutoff meant that two players born in the same year could be in different age groups. To make it more confusing, different school systems have different cutoff months for going into the new grades. This new calendar year system makes soccer easier. If you're born in a certain year you belong in that certain age group. Simple. It also puts our players on the same age-playing calendar as the rest of the world so they will be used to competing in the right age group.

The birth-year registration initiative will not cause the dissolution of age-group based teams that already play together, but will rather give players the opportunity to 'play up' with older age-groups.

*Dan*

**#WeAreSpotswood**